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WHITE HOUSE ACCUSED OF LEAKING NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES

The White House leaked the highly secret National Intelligence Estimates on Soviet strategic strength to the news media earlier this year in order to win support for the SALT II treaty, Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N. Y.) has charged.

"When I came to Washington, an official of the Executive Branch would have considered it a grievous misuse of his position even to talk about. . . [the National Intelligence Estimates] -- that is, outside official circles -- and to give one of them to be published would have been thought behavior that would verge upon the despicable. It now has become routine."

Specifically, Moynihan cited a New York Times story of May 12 on the U. S. /Soviet strategic balance, and said the story "is the [Carter] Administration revealing to the world the National Intelligence Estimate. That should be serious misconduct. It suggests a disregard verging on disdain for the purpose and functions of the agency [CIA] whose job it is to collect and make these assessments."